



SIGNAL online 2005

Archives

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1. SOLS BUDGET CUT - Initial Stage of Permanent Reductions

Southern Ontario Library Service (SOLS) and Ontario Library Service – North (OLS-N) recently received notice of a budget cut from the Ontario Ministry of Culture. The cut is \$700,000 in this fiscal year, representing between a 14% and 15% cut. SOLS' share of this amount is \$462,000.

Painfully, this new cut follows a very difficult year last year when, after 10 years of flat line budgets, we faced a \$200,000 shortfall. Just last year, we closed our Ottawa office, downsized the Toronto office, restructured Board meetings, introduced voluntary reduced time for staff, restructured service delivery in Library Development, implemented a new fee structure and reduced the frequency of deliveries.

We have also worked closely with OLS-N to streamline service delivery between the two organizations and ensure that there is no duplication.

Within this context, there is no infrastructure left to cut and we can only find further reductions in services.

Since this cut comes in year, with our first quarter already past, balancing our budget will take several strategies, some one time and others permanent.

The first stage of reductions was announced on June 22 when we notified the library community of a 10 day layoff of all staff, including management, over the summer. The layoff will be taken as an operational shutdown, mostly on Fridays, in July and August. Delivery will be handled as two single weeks later in the year. This choice was an effort to share the burden of the budget cut across the entire staff, to help us avoid as many permanent layoffs as we can and to minimize impact on libraries. It is intended as a one time cut to help us balance our budget this year. Other one time cuts include suspension of spending for vans, computers, furniture and supplies, elimination of all staff training, and a delay in publishing Library Development Guides including *The Library's Contribution to Your Community*.

To begin to identify the permanent reductions needed to balance the budget, the Board reviewed SOLS' priorities and services as outlined in *Stronger Libraries Stronger Communities*. Cuts were considered working from our lowest priorities up to our highest. We are now proceeding with the initial stage of permanent reductions with the following programs being reduced or cut. These choices were based on their level of priority and whether similar services are or may be provided by other organizations in future.

- We are eliminating province-wide research, a newly created function to provide information on library and socio-demographic trends that all libraries need for their own planning. Two staff positions cut.
- We are reducing consortia/charitable purchasing, a service that provides economies of scale discounts to libraries on a variety of goods and services. One staff position cut.
- We are reducing the amount of material that we translate for our French language clients. Half of a staff position cut.

This initial stage of permanent reductions total annualized savings of approximately \$230,000 or 50% of what we need to find. In order to find the remaining savings, we are planning a consultation process with our client libraries. This will happen shortly, though how the consultation will be conducted is yet to be determined.

We deeply regret the loss of services and the personal cost to the staff members affected. We are also extremely grateful for the widespread support from our client libraries, trustees and many politicians.

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2. NEW CONSORTIA PURCHASING AGREEMENT FOR TOTE BAGS

SOLS negotiates **charitable/consortia purchasing agreements** (CPAs) on behalf of SOLS libraries. CPAs are economies of scale pricing for the purchase or lease of a range of goods and services.

On June 16th, SOLS CEOs and SOLS CPA listserv participants were notified that the JanWay Company has prepared an offer for a new CPA for the purchase of tote bags. A promotional flyer which detailed the products, pricing, order deadline and shipping dates for SOLS libraries was attached to the message. This offer is similar to the program we ran so successfully last year, with a few changes. There are three natural canvas totes as well as a new coloured 600 denier polyester-nylon version of the 308Z canvas bag, for the same price as the natural canvas. The prices for the product are the same as last year, with the 10% discount over the usual market price continuing to apply. Existing customers that re-order will not be charged set up fees, as long as they use the same artwork as last time. Shipping is extra.

The order deadline is Friday, August 5, 2005 with shipping in September. Orders, including those for custom art work, should be placed directly to JanWay. For further assistance contact Bill Lynch, JanWay Sales Consultant by telephone at 1-416-244-4024, toll-free at 1-800-877-5242 or by e-mail at bill.lynch@sympatico.ca.

Further information on Charitable/Consortia Purchasing Agreements can be found at <http://www.sols.org/resource sharing/coolcpa/cpa/index.htm>.

On that Web page, the various CPAs are organized by product and service, as well as by Vendor.

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3. NETLIBRARY e-Book project

Earlier this spring, SOLS and OLS-North announced a joint initiative to introduce a core collection of electronic resources to Ontarians through their public libraries. SOLS and OLS-North are subsidizing the cost for libraries to participate in the NetLibrary eBook collection at a rate of \$100 per library. This will cover 100% of the cost of participation for libraries serving populations under 15,000, including all First Nations libraries, and introduce 200 new libraries to the project. This collection will be launched in the summer of 2005. Public libraries will be asked to participate in the selection process with a Collection Development Committee in the spring.

Ontario's Shared eBook collection is a project of COOL (Consortium of Ontario Libraries). COOL is a multi-sector buying group for electronic products involving university, college, school and public libraries. Further information about this initiative is posted on the SOLS website. From the main page, select 'COOL and CPA' under 'Resource sharing'. Then select 'Product in Alphabetical Order' and select netLibrary/COOL E-Book Shared Collection. You can also move directly to the information at <http://www.sols.org/resource sharing/coolcpa/cooldata/product.aspx?prod=47>

To participate in this initiative, you need to register with SOLS using the form provided on the website. Many libraries have already submitted their registration agreements, but for those who have not, please do so by **Thursday, July 14, 2005**, so that the list can be sent on to netLibrary. If you have any questions about the form, please contact Dayna Lintner at 1-800-387-5765, extension 5112 or by e-mail at dlintner@sols.org

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4. MINOR CHANGES TO SOLS DELIVERY SERVICE – Effective June 27, 2005

On Monday, June 27, 2005, SOLS delivery routes H, I, J, K and L were modified to keep our operational costs in line. Libraries were contacted directly by Mary Jo Lynett, Delivery Service Supervisor, if the change affected them. The current number of days of delivery was not changed but some libraries will see a change in the time(s) of delivery, day(s) of delivery and/or their route designation. The changes are as follows:

Brant County (Paris) - Route J
 Burlington – Route I
 Cambridge – Route J
 Guelph University – Route H
 Oakville – Route I

Routes and schedules for SOLS delivery services are posted at
<http://www.sols.org/resourcesharing/delivery/index.htm>

5. GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

"New Horizons for Seniors" is a funding program from Social Development Canada. This program provides funding for community-based projects across Canada to encourage seniors to continue to play an important role in their community by: helping those in need; providing leadership; and sharing their knowledge and skills with others. The application deadline is September 16, 2005. There is a link to the site through the main SOLS web page at www.sols.org. The direct link to the program is <http://www.sdc.gc.ca/en/isp/horizons/toc.shtml>

6. SOUTHERN ONTARIO MULTILINGUAL POOL (SOMP) – Opportunity to join

- Do you struggle with having materials in various languages?
- Is your community changing and you need material in different languages?
- Do you have limited funds to spend on developing a multilingual collection?
- Do you have difficulty finding where you can purchase such materials?

The Southern Ontario Multilingual Pool (SOMP) may be the answer to your problems.

SOMP has DVDs and Videos in 23 languages and print material in 25 languages. The DVD/Video collection is rotated twice a year and the print once, thus providing a steady supply of fresh, popular materials. Membership enables an individual library to offer a greater variety and quantity of materials at a minimal cost. As well, you have the opportunity to offer material in new languages without making a large dollar commitment.

SOLS provides administrative support by ordering, processing and distributing materials. Economies of scale are achieved by using the purchasing power of many libraries together and you have no more worries about where to purchase materials.

A typical library borrows 15 print blocks and 15 video blocks. Each block contains 20 items. At an average cost of \$25 for print and \$35 for DVD/Video, the material would cost \$18,000 and you would have to catalogue, order and process the material. Compare this to the cost of SOMP membership in 2005 of \$1310.87 plus GST and you realize that you can get a lot more for your money plus you get a collection that is constantly changing. SOMP allows you to expand and diversify your multilingual collection in a cost effective manner.

Another benefit of belonging to SOMP is the Annual General Meeting held in the spring allows you to develop contacts with other libraries with similar interests. The members decide what languages and formats should be purchased for the upcoming year at the AGM. SOMP currently has 23 member libraries with a shared goal of serving our multilingual communities.

For more information or to become a member of SOMP, contact Susan Crawford, Chairperson of SOMP at 905-668-6531 ext. 2027 or email scrawford@whitbylibrary.on.ca. You may also contact Lynda Dowdle, SOLS Pools Administrator at 1-800-387-5765, ext. 5124 or

pools@sols.org. Information is also available on the SOLS website at www.sols.org/resourcesharing/pools/somp/Index.htm.

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7. SOLS TRAINING WORKSHOPS IN FALL 2005 – *Registration opens Monday, August 8, 2005*

Training information is available at <http://www.sols.org/training/workshops/index.html>. This will take you to electronic registration forms and maps for all training. Registration opens on Monday, August 8, 2005.

Workshop No.1 - "Community Outreach: The library and its community"

The library's raison d'être is to provide the best service possible to its community. Yet to be a dynamic, involved service provider it is not enough to open the doors and wait for your community to find you. You must reach out, connect and facilitate a communication process that allows you to be the first place of contact for all community issues. You must be creative and proactive and be a customer-focused organization that encourages partnerships within your community that will work in unison for the greatest mutual benefit. Key topics will include:

- Creating the case for community outreach
- The community outreach portfolio
- Connecting with your community and creating partnerships
- Programming as outreach
- Outreach and advocacy
- A progressive model or starting small

Workshop Locations and Dates:

Whitby Public Library, Tuesday, September 20, 2005, from 1pm to 4pm
 Barrie Public Library, Thursday, September 22, 2005, from 1pm to 4pm
 Grimsby Public Library – The Gallery, Wednesday, October 26, 2005, from 1pm to 4pm
 Woodstock Public Library, Tuesday, November 15, 2005, from 1pm to 4pm

Workshop no. 2 - "Murder in the Stacks"

Are you mystified by mysteries? Are crime books a conundrum to you? [Title of workshop] will provide clues to what this popular genre is all about. The workshop covers the definition of mystery and crime books and what accounts for their popularity; sub-genres and their authors; sources of online, print, and other information for both upcoming and older books; current and anticipated trends; and which new authors are similar to older authors COLOR="#ff0000">. >Learn about the works of North American and British authors. There will also be suggestions of how Crime Writers of Canada, the professional association of Canadian crime and mystery authors, can help you "market" Canadian crime books and their authors.

Workshop Locations and Dates:

L.E. Shore Public Library [Thornbury], Tuesday, September 27, 2005 from 1pm to 4pm
 Oshawa Public Library, Northview Branch, Thursday, September 29, 2005 from 1pm to 4pm
 Ottawa Public Library, Carp Branch, Friday, September 30, 2005 from 10am to 1pm
 London Public Library, Masonville Branch, Friday, October 7, 2005 from 1pm to 4pm

Workshop No.3 - "Managing Stress in the workplace: Resiliency skills for you and your staff"

Developing resiliency skills benefits everyone, even managers! Productivity increases, communications are smoother, conflicts are reduced, calories are lost, stress levels fall and teamwork takes off! This session will help you to develop your personal resilience skills and help you create an environment where your staff can more effectively handle working in this age of "permanent white waters" with its ever increasing workload and rate of change.

Workshop Locations and Dates:

Ajax Public Library, Main, Tuesday, October 4, 2005 from noon to 4pm
 Brampton Public Library, Main, Thursday, October 13, 2005 from noon to 4pm
 London Public Library, Masonville Branch, Friday, October 14, 2005 from 9:30am to 1:30pm

Workshop No.4 - "Service to Teens in Public Libraries"

This will be an interactive workshop, covering many aspects of teen services librarianship, including adolescent development, advisory groups, collections, booktalking, intellectual freedom, programming and behaviour management. In this workshop, among other topics, our presenter will speak to teen services philosophy and staff training, provide a profile of adolescents, and discuss collection development trends and teen programming examples from Toronto and Pickering Public Libraries. This workshop will be of interest to libraries building their teen services or to library staff currently responsible for teen services.

Workshop Locations and Dates:

Whitby Public Library, Monday, October 24, 2005 from 10am to 4pm
 Barrie Public Library, Main, Monday, November 7, 2005 from 10am to 4pm
 Ottawa Public Library, Stittsville Branch, Monday, November 21, 2005 from 10am to 4pm
 Huron County Public Library, Wingham Branch, Monday, November 28, 2005 from 10am to 4pm

Workshop No.5 -

"Know Where You Are: Understanding your library's current reality by means of a Situational Analysis"

It is important for public libraries to periodically undertake an analysis of their current situation with regards to the development and delivery of library service. While sometimes referred to as a needs assessment, this work of investigating in order to understand the library's current situation is also known as a Situational Analysis. A Situational Analysis results in a collective understanding of the current reality, on the part of Board and staff. This collective understanding is a crucial step in any formal planning process, and is a worthwhile activity in its own right. This workshop will present an approach to conducting a broad-based Situational Analysis that includes gathering and making sense of information on the library's current programs and services, the library's mission and values, the community served by the library, feedback from current library users, and forces from the external environment. Participants will be given the opportunity to consider appropriate methodologies from a variety of tools, offering varying degrees of complexity.

Workshop Locations and Dates:

Ramara Township Public Library, Atherley Branch, Thursday, November 10, 2005 from 1pm to 4pm
 Cobourg Public Library, Thursday, November 17, 2005 from 1pm to 4pm
 North Grenville Public Library, Friday, November 18, 2005 from 1pm to 4pm
 St. Catharines Public Library, Tuesday, November 22, 2005 from 1pm to 4pm
 Stratford Public Library, Friday, November 25, 2005 from 1pm to 4pm

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8. TD SUMMER READING PROGRAM

All of the materials have now been distributed – that includes the official TD Summer Reading booklets, posters, and stickers as well as the materials from the Canadian Space Agency. If you are missing any of these items, please contact Peggy Malcolm at summerreading@sols.org

Be sure to check the requirements for the **Statistics and Evaluation form** that have been posted on the Official "Blast Off" website, as posted by Library and Archives Canada at <http://www.td-club-td.ca/009003-500-e.html>. The form has been posted for your information, and the interactive form that will need to be submitted, will be "live" in August. Individual library branches are asked to provide their evaluation responses to their main branch or HQ so that **each library system** fills out a unique Online Statistics and Evaluation Form on the TD Summer Reading Club official website. This year, all of the statistical and evaluative information will be sent online to Library and Archives Canada, rather than to SOLS.

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9. FRENCH SERVICES UPDATES

a) **French Collection Tips** - The SOLS French Services Consultant, Claire-Marie Paquette-Finlay, has been compiling a series of "French Collection Tips". A recent "Tip" included information about the 2005 Arthur Ellis Awards sponsored by the Crime Writers of Canada. The entire list is posted at http://www.crimewriterscanada.com/files/2005_shortlists.html but the French titles are as following:

Ann Lamontagne, *Les Douze Pierres* (Vents d'Ouest) winner
 Jean-Pierre Charland, *La Souris et le rat* (Vents d'Ouest)
 Jacques Diamant, *Le Transmetteur* (Stanké) 2004
 Louise Lévesque, *Virgo intacta* (La Veuve noire)
 Pauline Vincent, *La Femme de Berlin* (Libre Expression)

The "Tip" listed the French titles and provided evaluative information and annotations for the books. If you are interested in receiving regular "French Collection Tips" via e-mail from the SOLS French services consultant, please e-mail her at cmfinlay@sols.org.

b) "Searching for French Bibliographic Records" guide

Over the past few months, there had been a number of requests for French translations of popular authors, such as Anne Rice or Kathy Reichs. It seemed that searching through the INFO database was not yielding satisfactory results. After some testing and consultation, Gale Thompson from the SOLS Help Desk Staff created a brief guide to address this problem. Called "Searching for French Bibliographic Records", this guide provides step by step instructions on how to search for, and single out, French books. The research shows that there are a number of libraries in the network that have substantial French collections, including the Bibliothèque nationale du Québec (BNQ) which is now part of the INFO/VDX network. This "national" collection includes all works published in Québec in French and English as well as the collection of the Bibliothèque de Montréal.

For your reference, the guide has now been posted in the 'French Services Resources' sub-section of Clearinghouse section of the SOLS website. The direct link to the guide is at <http://www.sols.org/resourcesharing/INFO/searchforfrenchrecords.htm>.

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10. First Nations Reading Circle Program

With the generous support of a grant from The Coca-Cola Foundation and the *Share the*

Stories program SOLS has developed the content and acquired the materials for the First Nations Reading Circle Program. The reading program promotes aboriginal culture and stories through theme-based programs. This week, the first boxes of program kits will be distributed to participating First Nations Libraries.

SOLS staff prepared a manual on managing a reading circle program for children ages six to eight years. The eleven theme based programs are: Differences, Grandparents, Night, Sharing and Giving, Powwow, Seasons, Turtles, Vision Quests, Wolves, Young Heroes and Heroines. The program kits include a guide to the theme, books, and support resources such as puppets, music and realia. The program is also supported by craft boxes made possible by donations from Rubbermaid Canada and Sanford Canada.

Eight First Nation public libraries will receive and house boxes of program material. Upon request, they will share them with all southern Ontario First Nation Libraries.

At this time, the theme guides "*Young Heroes and Heroines*" and "*Sharing and Giving*" are available on the First Nations Resource page of the SOLS website at <http://www.sols.org/links/clearinghouse/firstnations/readingcircles/index1.htm>

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11. FIRST NATION UPDATES

a) Successful Pilot Project Earns Continued Support for Cross-cultural Arts Programming in 2005-2006

First Nation public libraries across Ontario will host cross-cultural arts programming and exchanges in their communities this year, thanks to a successful pilot project which ran last February. SOLS has just learned that Mariposa In The Schools (MITS) is ready to resume work with Patty Lawlor, First Nations consultant with SOLS, to plan dynamic, professional arts programming in another five to seven First Nation public libraries. Host librarians will select, from the MITS catalogue, performing artists who have an interest in learning about First Nations' arts and culture while presenting workshops and performances showcasing their own backgrounds and talents. SOLS will work with the host librarians, MITS and OLS-North to ensure the extended program builds on the pilot program's success.

Patty supported MITS in the successful application for pilot program extension. The pilot project involved five First Nation public libraries across Ontario during First Nations Public Library Week and covered costs of approximately \$10,000. For information about the pilot project, a shared initiative of MITS, SOLS and OLS-North, visit the SOLS website at: <http://www.sols.org/marketing/fnpubliclibraryweek/mariposa.htm>

b) Canadian Library Association (CLA) Interest Group Receives Special Project Funding for Aboriginal Library Recruitment

During the coming year, CLA's Interest Group (IG) on the Library and Information Needs of Native People will develop a brochure and CLA website content to promote the library profession to Aboriginal community members, recruit Aboriginal students to the information management professions, and educate non-Aboriginal members about Aboriginal knowledge and information needs/interests. This much-needed initiative is welcome fit with the achievement of objectives and action plans associated with the Staffing Goal identified in the First Nation public library community's *Our Way Forward: A Strategic Plan for Ontario First Nation Public Libraries*.

c) Royal Couple Appreciates First Nation Communities Read Book Gift

"Our daughter loves books and we read every evening," the Countess of Wessex told Patty Lawlor. "We'll enjoy the picture book we've received immensely." The Earl and Countess of Wessex (formerly known as Prince Edward and Sophie Rhys-Jones) received copies of

Dragonfly Kites by Tomson Highway (2003), *Solomon's Tree* by Andrea Spalding (2004), and *SkySisters* by Jan Bourdeau Waboose (2005) on the occasion of their visit to Toronto on June 6 to mark the 100th anniversary of the signing of the James Bay Treaty. The Honourable James K. Bartleman, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, hosted the anniversary reception and made a private presentation of the First Nation Communities Read titles on behalf of the First Nations public library community.

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12. ADDITIONS TO THE WEBSITE

a) French collection development resources -

In the SOLS Clearinghouse, at <http://www.sols.org/links/clearinghouse/index.htm>, there are further links on a variety of topics. One new addition to the Clearinghouse concerns **French Collection Development** resources. A number of resources for French Collection Development have been posted on the SOLS French Services Resources page. The annotations and explanations about these resources are in English, to help non-francophone selectors. From this page, there are links to other organizations such as Communication Jeunesse. Communication Jeunesse is a non-profit organization promoting French Canadian literature for children. Some lists can be downloaded. One example is the 'new books list' called "Nouveautés" which lists all the new titles published in Québec and French Canada in the last six months. Another helpful link on that page links to the lists of titles chosen by Communication Jeunesse's reading club members for 2004-2005. This is the equivalent of OLA's Forest of Books. The lists are posted at <http://www.communication-jeunesse.qc.ca/actualites/breves/fiches.php?id=50-56-6553>

b) MPMP - This year, libraries are being asked by municipal clerks for information on library services. The Municipal Performance Measures Program (MPMP) was described in an earlier edition of Signal. A link to the program has been added to the SOLS Clearinghouse. You can find the link in 'Library Administration Resources' under the sub-topic "Statistics". The direct link to the program is http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/userfiles/HTML/nts_1_22911_1.html

c) Rating DVDs and Videos - Following a number of enquiries about rating DVDs and videos, we have added a link to the "Technical Services Resources" section of the Clearinghouse page. This link will take you to the resources of the Media Awareness Network which provide an overview for a number of rating systems currently in use. The direct link to this information is http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/parents/movies/rating_movies.cfm

d) Kempenfelt conference - The details for the Kempenfelt Conference have been posted in the Highlights section of the main SOLS web page at www.sols.org. This conference, for staff working in county libraries, is being held from September 11-15, 2005. The theme is "Canadian, Eh? @your library". Information and course outline can be found on the Kempenfelt page.

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13. CHANGES TO RETAIL SALES TAX EXEMPTIONS

On May 11, 2005, a number of measures relating to the *Retail Sales Tax (RST) Act* and its regulations were announced in the 2005 Ontario Budget. The legislation must be passed by the Legislature and receive Royal Assent to become law.

The Ontario government proposes to update the RST exemption for publications produced or purchased by religious, charitable or benevolent organizations to include CD-ROMs and DVDs used to promote the objectives of the organization. It is also proposed that the RST exemption for publications purchased by schools, school boards, community colleges, universities and public libraries be updated to include educational DVDs, provided they will not be used for commercial exhibition for profit. The exemption may be claimed by providing the supplier with

a valid Purchase Exemption Certificate (PEC). For information about PECs, refer to **RST Guide 204 - Purchase Exemption Certificates**. These changes are effective for purchases made after May 11, 2005.

For more information, you can contact the nearest Ontario Ministry of Finance Tax Office listed under Taxes - Provincial (Retail) Sales Tax in the blue pages of your telephone directory, call our TAX FAX Service at 1-877-4-TAX-FAX (1-877-482-9329), or visit the website at www.trd.fin.gov.on.ca.

14. SERVICE ONTARIO PILOT PROJECT WORKING IN SOUTHERN ONTARIO LIBRARIES

ServiceOntario provides easy and convenient one step access to government information and services – online, in person or by phone. For example, ServiceOntario allows Ontarians to change their address on their driver's licence, register a business name, or get information about applying for a birth certificate. The Ontario government has introduced a pilot project that will bring ServiceOntario to 34 public and First Nations libraries in rural and remote communities across the province. The Ontario government is providing \$140,000 to train municipal library staff in 34 rural and remote communities about ServiceOntario. This will improve services to Ontarians who previously had limited access to government information and services.

In southern Ontario, the libraries participating in the ServiceOntario pilot project are: Bkejwanong First Nation PL, Bruce County PL (Cargill, Chesley, and Tobermory branches), Chatham-Kent PL (Blenheim, Thamesville, Tilbury, and Wallaceburg branches), Haldimand County PL (Caledonia Branch), Huron County PL (Exeter and Goderich branches), Kawartha Lakes PL (Kinmount Branch), Kingston-Frontenac (Arden, Cloyne, and Kingston branches), Middlesex County (Dorchester and Strathroy branches), North Kawartha PL, Russell Township PL (Russell and Embrun branches), Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry PL (Alexandria and Morrisburg branches), Waterloo Regional Library (Elmira Branch), West Grey PL (Durham and Neustadt branches). A copy of the press release has been linked to our "Highlights" section of our website at <http://www.sols.org>. The announcement is posted at <http://www.cbs.gov.on.ca/mcbs/english/serv061305.htm>

15. SOLS CEO LISTSERV

SOLS maintains a list of all the e-mail addresses for SOLS CEOs. It is this list that is used to distribute *Signal*. Several times through the month, you may also receive other messages from SOLS. This month, the following messages were sent:

On June 22nd, Daryl Novak sent a message on behalf of Laurey Gillies about the first cuts to SOLS services as a result of the reduction in operating grant to SOLS. More information is included in this issue of *Signal*.

On June 24th, Barbara Franchetto forwarded a message on behalf of the chairperson of the Southern Ontario Multilingual Pool (SOMP). The message contained an invitation to join SOMP. Further information is included in this issue of *Signal*.

If you did not receive these messages, and would like further information, please contact the SOLS HelpDesk at 1-800-387-5765, ext. 4, or by e-mail to helpdesk@sols.org

16. SOLS BOARD SUMMARY - JUNE 2005

Budget Cut

SOLS' Board was notified of a cut to its operating budget by the Deputy Minister of Culture just prior to its June 4, 2005 meeting. SOLS and OLS-N have been told that they have a \$700,000 cut this fiscal year. Our combined operating budgets are about \$4.8 million and so this figure represents between a 14% and 15% cut. Typically, SOLS' share of this amount would be close to \$465,000.

Painfully, this new cut follows the very difficult 2004/2005 fiscal year when, after 10 years of flatline budgets, we faced a \$200,000 shortfall. Just last year, we implemented cuts to administration, staff and services in that order of priority. We closed our Ottawa office and relocated the staff to home offices. The Toronto office was downsized and moved to contain rent costs.

The Board restructured its meetings to reduce accommodation and travel expenses. Voluntary reduced time was introduced for interested staff. Service delivery in Library Development was restructured and one staff member was laid off. A new fee structure was introduced and the frequency of deliveries to libraries was reduced. Within this context, there are few administrative savings left and we can only find further reductions in services.

In grappling with the news of this latest cut, the Board reviewed SOLS' priorities and services as outlined in *Stronger Libraries Stronger Communities*, our recently published service plan for 2004 – 2007. Our discussion covered our mandate from the Ministry, the needs of our clients, our partnership with OLS-North, the information available from the Ontario Digital Library and the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries of their plans, and how other jurisdictions handle their resource sharing. We concluded that our priorities are in the proper order and so we reviewed what cuts we could make working from our lowest priorities up to our highest. While staff have yet to finalize the details, we know we will have to see changes in all of our service areas.

SOLS' Board is very distressed by this cut and the impact it will have on library services. We have decided to renew our efforts to inform MPPs of the important role that SOLS and OLS-N play and to ask for their support to have this cut reversed. We are also asking our client libraries to contact their own MPP, the Minister of Culture and their own council to let them know how important SOLS' services are to them and to their users.

New Board Members - The June 4, 2005 meeting was the inaugural meeting of the new Board. SOLS' Board is composed of fifteen trustees elected from our client libraries through the Trustee Councils and five ministerial nominees. The Board serves for a three year term. Not all positions were filled in time for the meeting but we did welcome the following new members (identified below with an asterisk) and re-elected members. Biographies of new board members are a feature of *Signal*, SOLS' monthly email newsletter.

Name and Affiliation

Lynne Baxter* Trustee Council 8/ North Grenville
 Brenda Carrigan Trustee Council 5/Clarington
 Paul Elgie* Trustee Council 3/Huron County
 Bob Ernest* Trustee Council 3/Waterloo Public
 Sandy French* Trustee Council 2/Halton Hills
 Jackie Houde* Trustee Council 8/Cornwall
 Vince Marchesano Trustee Council 1/Norfolk
 Jane Marlatt Trustee Council 5/North Kawartha
 Alan McEwen Trustee Council 2/St. Catharines
 Stephanie Murray* Trustee Council 1/Lambton County
 Jim Neill Trustee Council 6/Kingston-Frontenac
 Jane Van der Kraan Trustee Council 4/Huntsville
 Patricia Waters-Holst Trustee Council 7/Petawawa

Board Action Plan - To facilitate the work of the new Board, the outgoing Board had prepared a self-evaluation report that covered its three year term. This "legacy document" provided the basis both for the orientation of the new Board members and for an initial discussion of the Board's Action Plan for the new three year term. The new Board identified a variety of projects it could undertake within each of the tasks of its job description – linking with the public libraries of southern Ontario, assuring funding with the provincial government as well as through other prospects, assuring executive performance and developing policy. The Plan will be further developed at the September Board meeting.

Assurance of Funding - MPP Visits - One of the four jobs of the Board is assurance of funding through advocating the provincial government for optimal funding and pursuing a variety of funding and resource development activities that support SOLS' Ends priorities.

The Board launched its program to visit all MPPs whose ridings overlap SOLS' service area as well as most Cabinet Ministers a couple of years ago. A total of 77 visits were planned and forty-one have been completed to date. As part of the visiting program, there has been a lively correspondence between the Board and MPPs which is being renewed in light of the latest budget cut.

Assurance of Funding – Fundraising - SOLS' Board launched a campaign to solicit individual donations to support the work SOLS does to assist public libraries. A pilot stage of the campaign was initiated last fall and the target of \$5,000 was achieved. The spring campaign is now underway with a target of \$30,000 for this year's budget. The campaign is running from April 1 to September 30, 2005. To date, \$5,000 has been pledged by people coming in at the \$1,000 Leader's level with other donations nearing a further \$3,000. We estimate that we will need to make 125 asks and achieve an average donation of \$350 to reach the target. Donations are targeted to an Innovation Fund which will help SOLS implement such initiatives as this year's e-book project. Please visit our Support SOLS web page for information on how to help in these important projects.

Provincial Marketing – Library Booth at AMO - SOLS Board continues to support the Provincial Marketing Committee's efforts at the annual Association of Municipalities of Ontario conference. In addition to a financial contribution, SOLS Board members participate in staffing the booth. This year our volunteers are Brenda Carrigan, Susannah Ketchum, and Jim Neill.

Operations Planning Quarterly Update - An update on SOLS' services is available at <http://www.sols.org/aboutsols/reports/index.htm>.

Next Board Meeting - The next meeting of SOLS' Board is scheduled for Saturday, September 10, 2005 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at SOLS' office in Toronto.

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17. NEW SOLS BOARD MEMBERS

As mentioned earlier, there are several new members on the SOLS board. The biographies of three new members are included here:

Lynne Baxter from the North Grenville Public Library and a representative of Trustee Council #8 - Lynne is currently Vice Chair of the North Grenville Public Library Board and is in her 5th year as a Board trustee. She is also, since last fall, Chair of the Area 8 Trustee Council. She is also in a working group to find a new building for our Kemptville Branch and ultimately a central library. Lynne is a Registered Plan Analyst for the Registered Plan Directorate of Canada Revenue Agency. When she is not working or attending Library related meetings and events, she is Co-Chair of the Dandelion Festival (held the first Saturday in June each year) and leader of the local T.O.P.S. Chapter. As Chair of the Dandelion Festival she also has a seat on the North Grenville Arts and Culture Council.

Jackie Houde from the Cornwall Public Library and a representative of Trustee Council #8 -

Jackie is the Chair of the Cornwall Public Library board. She is a retired teacher who taught for 34 years at the elementary level.

Stephanie Murray from Lambton County Library and representative of Trustee Council 1

- Stephanie has been a non-elected member of the committee of council that governs the Lambton County library since 2001. Her lifelong involvement in libraries began in her home town of Corner Brook, Newfoundland where she was the first juvenile patron assigned a library card, and continued with her first job at the Sarnia Public Library, Children's Branch. Following a number of years in Corporate Customer Service and Marketing Management, and a complete career change in the late 1990s to Microsoft Networking Professional, Systems Engineer and Certified Trainer, she is now semi-retired and waiting for her third career direction to make itself known. In the interim, she is an active volunteer with local seniors' programmes, as well as a member of the Bluewater Health Community Advisory Panel.

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